

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 5, 10, 20 and 22 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A color processing method of determining a combination of color material signals of a plurality of kinds of color materials for reproducing a color represented by an input color signal designated by three color signals, ~~said~~ the method comprising:

using a processor to perform the steps of:

obtaining a plurality of combinations of ~~the plurality of kinds of color materials~~ material signals, each of the combinations being capable of reproducing a color represented by the input color signal;

setting a function which represents a relation between color ~~signal~~ signals of target colors that change from white to black and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals and in which a change in the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the input color signal is continuous with a change in the ~~input color signal~~ signals of the target colors that change from white to black, wherein the function is set based on a color signal of ~~[[a]]~~ the representative target colors corresponding to a color represented by the input color signal ~~color~~ and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the ~~representative target colors~~ color;

calculating the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals corresponding to the input color signal by using the set function; and

determining the combination of color material signals corresponding to the input color signal in the plurality of color material signals based on ~~the obtained plurality of combinations of the plurality of kinds of color materials, by using~~ the calculated total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~said~~ the step of determining the combination includes determining the combination corresponding to the input color signal with reference to a table, which determines the combination of the plurality of kinds of color material so that the total use amount of the color materials is determined according to the combination of the plurality of kinds of color materials, and meets the function for the total use amount within a range for the input color signal.

4. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the function is a spline function.

5. (Currently Amended) A color processing method as claimed in claim 4, wherein ~~said~~ the step of setting the function includes displaying a function for a total use amount for a predetermined color on a display device and setting the function based on input by an operation on the display.

6. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein of the plurality of kinds of color materials comprise yellow, magenta, cyan, and black.

7. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of kinds of color materials comprise yellow, magenta, cyan, black, and light magenta, having lower concentration than the magenta, and light cyan, having lower concentration than the cyan.

8. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the color materials comprise inks.

9. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the color materials comprise toners.

10. (Currently Amended) A color processing apparatus for determining a combination of color material signals of a plurality of kinds of color materials for reproducing a color represented by an input color signal designated by three color signals, comprising:

means for obtaining a plurality of combinations of ~~the plurality of kinds of color materials~~ material signals, each of the combinations being capable of reproducing a color represented by the input color signal,

means for setting a function which represents a relation between color ~~signal~~ signals of target colors that change from white to black and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals and in which a change in the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the input color signal is continuous with a change in the ~~input~~ color signal signals of the target colors that change from white to black, wherein the function is set based on a color signal of ~~[[a]]~~ the representative target colors corresponding to a color represented by the input color signal ~~color~~ and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the ~~representative target colors~~ color;

means for calculating the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals corresponding to the input color signal by using the set function; and

means for determining the combination of color material signals corresponding to the input color signal in the plurality of color material signals based on ~~the obtained plurality of combinations of the plurality of kinds of color materials~~, by using the calculated total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals.

11. to 19. (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium storing a program to make a computer execute a color processing method of determining a combination of color material signals of a plurality of kinds of color materials for reproducing a color represented by an input color signal designated by three color signals, ~~said~~ the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a plurality of combinations of ~~the plurality of kinds of color materials~~ material signals, each of the combinations being capable of reproducing a color represented by the input color signal;

setting a function which represents a relation between color ~~signal~~ signals of target colors that change from white to black and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals and in which a change in the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the input color signal is continuous with a change in the ~~input color signal~~ signals of the target colors that change from white to black, wherein the function is set based on a color signal of ~~[[a]]~~ the representative target colors corresponding to a color represented by the input color signal ~~color~~ and a total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals of the ~~representative target colors~~ color;

calculating the total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals corresponding to the input color signal by using the set function; and

determining the combination of color material signals corresponding to the input color signal in the plurality of color material signals based on ~~the obtained plurality of combinations of the plurality of kinds of color materials~~, by using the calculated total use amount of the color ~~materials~~ material signals.

21. (Previously Presented) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the representative color is a color having a highest saturation in each of hues of colors of the plurality of kinds of color materials.

22. (Currently Amended) A color processing method as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~said~~ the determining step determines the combination of the color material signals by selecting a combination of the color material signals nearest to a combination of the color material signals corresponding to input color signal of the calculated total use amount, from the plurality of combinations of the plurality of kinds color materials.

23. to 24. (Cancelled)